

Serial No. 10/760,486

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 were pending in the present application. Claims 1, 3, 5, and 7 have been canceled herein. Thus claims 2, 4, 6, 8 and 9 are now pending. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

The applicants note with appreciation the acknowledgement of the claim for priority under section 119 and the notice that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

The applicants acknowledge and appreciate receiving a copy of the form PTO-1449 submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on January 21, 2004 on which the Examiner has initialed all listed items.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by Tonar et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,700,692. Claim 1 is canceled herein rendering the rejection moot.

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Tonar et al., in view of Eggers, U.S. Patent No. 5,929,568. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 2 is amended to depend from claim 4 indicated allowable if rewritten. Claim 4 has been amended herein to include the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims and is thus allowable. Accordingly, claim 2 is also allowable by virtue of depending from claim 4. It is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 2 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 3 and 5 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Tonar et al., in view of Okamoto, JP 2001-244087. Claims 3 and 5 are canceled herein rendering the rejection moot.

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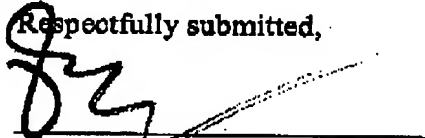
Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Tonar et al., in view of Okamoto, JP 2001-244087 and further in view of Tsuchida et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,438,425. Claim 7 is canceled herein rendering the rejection moot.

Applicants note with great appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter with regard to claims 4, 6, 8, and 9. Claims 4, 6, 8, and 9 have been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and intervening claims and are thus allowable. As noted above, claim 2 has been amended to depend from claim 4 and is thus allowable.

In view of the foregoing, the applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Please charge any unforeseen fees that may be due to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,


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